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Community Development Department

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Village of Westmont Planning and Zoning Commission March 8, 2017 - Minutes

The Village of Westmont Planning and Zoning Commission held its regular meeting on Wednesday, March 8, 2017 at 7:00 p.m., at the Westmont Village Hall, 31 W. Quincy Street, Westmont, Illinois 60559.

Chair Gregg Pill led in the following:

(1) Call to Order

(2) Roll Call

In attendance: Chair Gregg Pill, Commissioners Craig Thomas, Thomas Sharp, Janis Bartel, Doug Carmichael, Secretary Wallace Van Buren, Planner Joe Hennerfeind

Absent: Community Development Director Jill Ziegler

(3) Pledge of Allegiance.

(4) Swearing in of testifying attendees and reminder to sign in.

(5) Reminder to silence all electronic devices.

(6) Approval of Minutes of the January 11, 2017 meeting.

MOTION to approve January 11, 2017 minutes.

Motion by: Thomas

Second by: Bartel

VOTING A

Van Buren--Yes

Thomas--Yes

Sharp--Yes

Bartel--Yes

Pill--Yes

Carmichael--Yes

Motion passed.

(7) Open Hearing

New Business

PZ 17-002 Clover's Garden Center, LLC regarding the property located at 201 West Ogden Avenue, Westmont, IL 60559 for the following:

- (A) Special Use Permit renewal for a period of five years to allow for the continuation of a seasonal open sales lot in the B-2 General Business District.

PRESENTATION: Jim Kuehule presented on behalf of Clover's Garden Center. He mentioned that they are requesting a continuation of their permit for the garden center in the Suburbanite parking lot. He stated that they would have similar dates and set up, including spring and summer and fall pumpkin sales. He mentioned that they have been in Westmont for 20 years.

STAFF COMMENT: Hennerfeind stated that 1999 was the record of the permit. Since 1999 it was a three year permit, though last request in 2012 was renewed for a 5 year period. It is considered a special use for a temporary open sales lot. It does have two special conditions that it is not on a lot that is less than 20,000 square feet, and the Suburbanite lot is a sizable 150,000 square feet so it meets that condition, and it does not cause any adverse traffic conditions and Hennerfeind stated that he does not believe there are any complaints on record regarding this business. He noted that there is a temporary use for parking on the back of the lot, due to the construction at Ogden Lincoln which will expire before Clover's opens so that there would not be two special uses at the same time.

Pill asked if Ogden Lincoln could come back to the Board to allow an extension for their temporary parking permit Hennerfeind stated that they could come back to the Board but it would be on the applicant to prove that there is sufficient parking.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

COMMISSIONER COMMENT:

Van Buren: they have been a good neighbor, provide a good product and happy to support .

Thomas: only had a question on parking which was answered, supportive.

Sharp: welcome back for another season.

Bartel: very supportive.

Pill: mentioned the aerial shot which shows how easy it is to access their area and reiterated that it would be the same set up, glad to have them back for another 5 years.

Carmichael: supportive.

FINDINGS OF FACT (A)

1. YES=6 NO=0
2. YES=6 NO=0
3. YES=6 NO=0
4. YES=6 NO=0
5. YES=6 NO=0
6. YES=6 NO=0
7. YES=6 NO=0

MOTION A

Motion to recommend to the Village Board of Trustees to approve to a Special Use Permit renewal for a period of five years to allow for the continuation of a seasonal open sales lot in the B-2 General Business District.

Motion by: Carmichael

Second by: Sharp

VOTING A

Van Buren--Yes

Bartel--Yes

Thomas--Yes

Sharp--Yes

Carmichael--Yes

Pill--Yes

Motion passed.

Chairman Pill asked to pause New Business in order to allow for announcements as there were some meeting conflicts to work around.

Hennerfeind announced that the Village Manager has set up a joint meeting between Village Board and the Planning and Zoning Commission on March 29th at 7pm. It is a chance for the two groups to get together to discuss plans for the Village. Pill added that it is a meeting that takes place every two years to meet and receive direction from the Village Board.

Pill announced that there are only 6 commissioners and currently there is a vacancy. If anyone is interested they can contact the Village Manager, Jill Ziegler or Joe Hennerfeind. He stated the term is usually 3 years and they meet usually once per month or twice if there were a lot of items.

Pill mentioned that he is also the Chairman of the Westmont Restaurant Group and starting tomorrow they would be opening voting for the Westmont Dining Readers Choice for 2017. There are many categories and the winners will be announced at the awards ceremony. If you are interested there will be an online link for voting that can be accessed through the Westmont Chamber website. He also mentioned the debut of Westmont Restaurant week from March 9th through March 19th. These weeks are very popular now, and they have 23 restaurants participating with specials at each one. All of the menus are posted on the chamber website and you can visit as often and as many restaurants as you like and invite your friends and neighbors. They will be sharing with Judy Hsu on Channel 9 as well.

PZ 17-003 Westmont Park District regarding the properties located at 5716 South Wilmette Avenue, Westmont, IL 60559 for the following:

(A) Special Use Permit request to construct a public park in the R-3 Single Family Detached Residence District.

PRESENTATION: Bob Fleck from the Westmont Park District presented the Special Use request. Fleck thanked the Commission for adjusting the order as he was attending his Park Board meeting and arrived as soon as he could. He stated he was before the Commission to discuss Robert Bernas Park. Robert Bernas was a Park Commissioner for 43 years and the park was named in his honor. Fleck mentioned this project has been in the works for 20 years and the park was able to acquire the property a few years ago. Fleck presented background on the Park District's plan. It is their purpose to provide a neighborhood park or open space for every neighborhood in Westmont. He reviewed a map of the Park District area. They are nearly 100 percent effective in providing neighborhood parks in every area in Westmont. This particular property falls into quadrant ten which when created lacked open space. With the development of several of the McNaughton subdivisions, there were impact fees. As the homes sold, the impact fees were nominal compared to the cost of the property. As time went on the Park District was able to apply for a grant of up to 50 percent of the property cost, but the seller changed his mind on selling. At that time the Park District backed off the grant and decided not to condemn the owner's

property, which the owner appreciated and developed a relationship with him. The owner later approached and said that he had decided to sell but asked for a life estate on the property which was granted and the Park District applied for another grant. The owner is allowed to stay on the property until he chooses to leave and at that time the building will need to be removed as per the terms of the grant. Fleck showed a map of the parcel which is 4.78 acres and there are two parcels to the north which is where the Village pond sits. They are currently trying to consolidate the three parcels. They have an agreement with the Village that they maintain the open space and the Village maintains the stormwater. They now have a contiguous 6.78 acre area, which is the largest neighborhood park area in Westmont. With the development of the Ty Warner Park they do not bring programs into neighborhood parks. Fleck mentioned that they applied for a second grant to develop the property, which is required to start within 3 years. It was on hold by the state for two years, but has been reinstated and they have until August of 2018 to develop the area. It is the Park District's intent is to enhance the park's natural character, they will not be adding ball fields or lights. Fleck shared another rendering of the area, showing the existing state, the pond and discussed the wetland development on site. They have discovered the lot has a lot of peat and they will be working with that when constructing the structure and the parking lot. The parking lot will be permeable pavers; they will be treating water as a natural resource. The environment is an important part of how they develop the area. They invited residents of the area to a special meeting to keep neighbors informed. There will be access at the south end of the parking lot. The permeable paver parking lot will have 19 parking spaces. There will be extra gravel underneath the pavers where water will be released slowly back into the ground. There will be a playground which keeping with a natural look will not be overly colorful, and an open air shelter. The Commission was given some standard elevations of what that might look like which will have only a single security light, and there will be a pathway, plus a wooden boardwalk leading to a fishing pier for catch and release at the pond. There will be a small restroom facility open spring to fall with a drinking fountain that will be winterized every winter. There will be additional landscaping to help screen the restroom facility. All of the stormwater will be handled on site and treated as a natural resource for the area. Waiver of permit fees has been granted on most projects in the past unless there is a consultant fee required to review any of these plans. A waiver will be requested for the water tap fees and assistance from the water department for handling the drinking fountain and the restroom. Fleck mentioned that he knows it will be a Special Use since it is residential but stated that everyone deserves a park and open space to enjoy. He shared a past document from 2014 from Village Manager Ron Searl expressing support of this project. If all goes well with permit process this spring they are hoping to break ground in June.

STAFF COMMENT: Hennerfeind stated that it is a zoned residential R3. In the residential districts, parks are considered a special use, not a use by right but a use by consideration for the area and the surroundings. He stated that the additional comments that Fleck shared regarding presentations to the board and water department are not part of the consideration for tonight but just for informational purposes. The special use has no special conditions beyond the normal conditions for a special use. Hennerfeind stated that as Fleck mentioned he has addressed some of the traffic by not setting any programming at the site, and staff does not have any concerns. It also meets the setback requirements for the lot. There is a meandering sidewalk along Wilmette that will connect the existing sidewalks.

Fleck added one more picture to show the Commission a rendition of the boardwalk crossing a wetlands. Pill asked about the height of the grasses as they appear taller in the rendering. Fleck said at this time of year they would be knocked down. They are going to plant wetland plants and this will be a true jurisdictional wetland in the lower elevation, then there will be a traditional prairie surrounding the wetland which meets what is required by DuPage County.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Bernie Gloss, president of board of management at the Marke board condo association, and Nellie Matlock, board member, stated that they welcome this development. They mentioned two concerns, the first being a dead tree they are concerned about it falling and causing damage. The second is adding some additional landscaping to a messy area around the stormwater pipe to delineate the park from their properties.

Fleck passed his card to the residents and stated that any hazardous tree would be removed immediately.

Richard Barrera asked about the brick wall located at the northeast end that is kind of shaky and would it be replaced. Pill said that he was concerned about that as well. Fleck mentioned that he feels that a previous homeowner must have made that improvement prior to the Park District owning it. They have been doing cleanup and tree removal around the wall that is affecting its structure. Fleck stated if there is anything that needs to be addressed with the wall they will make sure to do so, but right now it has structural integrity and contributes to helping with the stormwater.

Rosie Welch, corner house on Wilmette and 56th, facing 56th, attended to ask a few questions regarding the development. She stated that she has a 9 year old son and would like to know what type of perimeter will be in place during construction since the kids play in that area and she is concerned about their access to the site and machinery. She asked what time during the day would construction take place. And she asked what effect this additional would have on property values. She stated that she is excited about but does have concerns as a homeowner and a mom.

Fleck stated that though he cannot address the specific effect on her property, there are studies by the NRPA that show well maintained parks raise property values and he can assist her in looking up that information. Work will not be started before 7am and weather permitting they may be able to work late but majority of the work will be done by 5pm. The contractor will be secured at the end of each work day to make sure there are no hazardous conditions, though there may be piles of dirt, etc. that they hope residents will not be playing on. Fleck stated that there are very little excavations, so the entire area will not necessarily be fenced off. Hennerfeind mentioned that the Park District will need to get proper permits for site development through engineering and community development which will define construction hours and fencing needs. Welch asked if public had access to view those documents. Hennerfeind said most documents could be viewed through a FOIA request, some though might not be able to be copied. Fleck stated that Welch was welcome to come to his office to view any of the construction documents.

Casey Peterson, resident living behind the current life estate resident, asked what the plan is for once the existing property is removed. Fleck replied that there would be grass. Peterson asked about vegetation in that area and if it would block views. Fleck replied that it would remain open as it is now but there would be additional vegetation added around the restroom. Peterson asked if the shelter would be able to be reserved. Fleck replied that yes, they will have the ability to reserve the shelter, but there will be a size limit as to the number of people that would be allowed. He mentioned that they have a similar park that they would base it off of, possibly restricted to 75 people.

COMMISSIONER COMMENT:

Thomas: stated he is always confident that the park district has done its due diligence. He did inquire about the drainage into the wetlands from the surrounding properties, if there is a benefit. Fleck: it is a benefit, they are keeping open space and preserving depressional storage on site and encourage natural drainage as well.

Sharp: asked about the entry sequence for the driveway to the existing house. Fleck: there will be a depression curb and two tire tracks leading up to house as it is now. Sharp: asked about sidewalks and connecting them. Fleck: mentioned that they are adding sidewalk for the width of their property and shown on drawing where the sidewalk would be installed. Sharp: asked if there was easement on west side of pond. Hennerfeind stated that they do not have a plat of survey for the site. Fleck said they do not show an easement on the west side, it's currently just a cow path to the pond. Sharp stated he is excited about the interpretive signage and suggested adding a rain barrel to the roof of the restroom as well. He is looking forward to visiting the park with his sons.

Bartel: very supportive of the project and excited about it, no lights for groups congregating at night is a great idea and the permeable parking lot is a great idea. She asked about the feedback from the residents during the meeting. She also asked about mosquito abatements plans for the village and this area. Fleck: replied that they many of the residents voiced similar concerns about the shelter and lighting, congregating at night and they were able to address those concerns during the meeting. The village does have a mosquito abatement program in place for areas and during special events and he believes that this park is already on that list. Bartel asked about anyone falling into the ponds. Fleck replied that we have gotten away from nature and the retention ponds being built with turf grass and not the proper shelves. The grass has a tendency to slough off and so it is their intention to do other plantings which will assist with the integrity of the banks of the ponds.

Carmichael: stated he had a few questions. He asked about the bioretention swales and how that works. Fleck: mentioned for bioretention that water loving plants are used and they are using perforated pipes to slowly infiltrate the water back into the area. Carmichael asked about the delineation of the 50 foot surrounding buffer, would pedestrians have to stay on the walkways. Fleck: said no the the moisture content will dictate where the prairie ends and wetland plants begin, they will find their natural happy place and he encourages people to walk through and kids to play in the nature areas surrounding this park. Carmichael mentioned another wetland area in the area and are they connected. Fleck replied that he is not aware they are connected. Carmichael asked about the sled hill. Fleck stated that it will not be a perfect sled hill position but there will be a cost savings by not hauling perfectly good dirt off site.

Van Buren: said he enjoyed the presentation and he is in favor.

Pill: thanked the Park District and residents for their comments which answered many of his questions. He asked about leaves and garbage in the area of the retaining wall. Fleck stated that they hope to re-vegetate that area, that they would like the shelf of having vegetation. He is not sure if the trees prevented the growth and they are hoping they will plant some shrubs and bushes and native plants and they will take over. Pill asked about the pond being connected. Fleck stated that it is its own body of water and not connected to anything other than village storm system. Pill asked about if the area will be burned in the spring. Fleck replied that it will take 3-5 years of growth before they can do that. Once they burn it reinforces the growth of the native plants and blackens the soil promoting healthy plant growth and lack of weeds. Pill asked about the signage and the homeowner that will still be onsite. Fleck felt it would be beneficial to add a private property sign in front of the house.

Fleck's final comments were on growing up in Westmont and being thankful for the Park District and the Park Board for their patience in bringing this project to the point of moving forward.

FINDINGS OF FACT (A)

1. YES=6 NO=0
2. YES=6 NO=0
3. YES=6 NO=0
4. YES=6 NO=0
5. YES=6 NO=0
6. YES=6 NO=0

MOTION A

Motion to recommend to the Village Board of Trustees to approve to a Special Use Permit request to construct a public park in the R-3 Single Family Detached Residence District.

Motion by: Bartel

Second by: Van Buren

VOTING A

Van Buren--Yes

Bartel--Yes

Thomas--Yes

Sharp--Yes

Carmichael--Yes

Pill--Yes

Motion passed.

Hennerfeind mentioned that April's meeting may have up to 5 items as the construction season begins.

(8) Motion to adjourn.

Motion by: Thomas

Second by: Carmichael

Meeting adjourned 8:24 p.m.